(b) if so, the details of shortfall in wheat production during the last three years;

(c) whether it is a fact that with a view to maintain the foodgrain stock at required level Government have decided to import wheat; and

(d) if so, the quantum of wheat imported so far during this year and out of this the quantum of wheat that has reached the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Production of wheat in the country during the last five years, *i.e.* from 2001-02 to 2005-06 does not show a perpetual decline. This can be seen from the table below:

Commodity	Production (Million Tonnes)				
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06*
Wheat	72.77	65.76	72.15	68.64	69.48

*4th Advance Estimates release on 15.07.2006.

Wheat production shows a mixed trend. Year 2002-03 was a drought year which resulted in sharp declins in wheat production. Deficient rains from the South-West Monsoon during 2004-05 and abnormal rise in temperature in February 2006 in States of north-western region adversely affected the production of wheat in 2004-05 and 2005-06.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) 55 lakh tonnes of wheat has been contracted for import by the State Trading Corporation of India, out of which 35 lakh tonnes has reached the country. In addition, it is estimated that 6.6 lakh tonnes of wheat imported by private traders has also reached the country as on 01.12.2006.

Strengthening/Promoting Agricultural Information System

1798. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is implementing a central scheme 'Strengthening/Promoting Agricultural Information System';

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to ensure that benefits of the scheme reach the small and marginal farmers; and

(d) the present status of the scheme and the amount of money spent on it, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The scheme has the following components:—

(i) IT Apparatus in Department of Agriculture & Cooperation Headquarters

(ii) IT Apparatus in the Field Offices and Directorates of DAC

(iii) Development of Agricultural Informatics and Communication

(iv) Agricultural Resources Information System (AgRIS)

(v) Strengthening of IT Apparatus in Agriculture & Cooperation in the States and Union Territories (AGRISNET)

(vi) Kisan Call Centres (KCC)

(c) The aim of components (iii), (iv) and (v) above is to provide information/ services to all farmers, including small and marginal farmers, using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) through development of web-based applications.

Kisan Call Centres (KCC) have been set up to provide information to all farmers, including small and marginal farmers, on queries raised by them on different aspects through toll free telephone lines.

(d) All the components of the scheme are under implementation. The total amount spent under the scheme so far during the Tenth Plan is Rs. 48.57 crores.

Special package for farmers of Orrisa

1799. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Orissa Government proposes to announce a special